

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,808,835 ("Green"). In response, Applicants do not believe that the Green reference can be properly applied as prior art under § 102(e). In this regard, the earliest effective prior art date for this reference is October 31, 2001 based on its PCT filing date. However, the present application is based on a PCT application (e.g., PCT/JP01/0067) with a filing date of July 31, 2001 where priority is further based on Japanese Patent Application No. P2000-230734 filed on July 31, 2000. Therefore, the earliest effective filing date of the present application predates the earliest effective § 102(e) prior art date of the Green reference, and thus, the anticipation rejection should be withdrawn at least for these reasons.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit reconsideration of same.

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY 

Thomas C. Basso
Reg. No. 46,541
P.O. Box 1135
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1135
Phone: (312) 807-4310

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